

## WIPP Quick Facts

(As of 04-05-06)

**4,472**

Shipments received since opening

**36,697**

Cubic meters of waste disposed

**76,623**

Containers disposed in the underground

## Trone appointed to new position

SNL-Carlsbad Program Group has announced the appointment of Janis Trone as the team lead for Quality Assurance (QA).

Trone has seven years of experience in WIPP QA. Since joining SNL in 1993, she has worked in QA, the National TRU Program and Performance Assessment.

## CEO Tour



Chuck Spencer, chief executive officer of WTS toured WIPP on March 23. Spencer was given briefings on all aspects of the project by WTS management. Pictured above (l to r): Dale Parrish, Chuck Spencer, Doug Steffen, Susan Scott, David Acevedo, Sean Coleman and Bobby St. John.

## EPA recertifies WIPP



Six months after declaring WIPP's Compliance Recertification Application administratively complete, the Environmental Protection Agency announced its decision to recertify WIPP. The recertification process occurs every five years, as required by the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act, and this was the first time WIPP has been recertified since opening in 1999.

"EPA's recertification reinforces the important mission of WIPP to safely dispose of defense-generated transuranic waste from across the nation," said James Rispoli, DOE's assistant secretary for environmental management.

WIPP employees cheered the decision, especially those who worked directly on the Compliance Recertification Application (CRA). "The teamwork on this project really stands out," says Steve Kouba, manager of EPA compliance programs at Washington Regulatory Environmental Services (WRES). "I've never seen people from different organizations come together and work so well to get a job done." In addition to WRES, the team included representatives from CBFO, WTS, LANL and SNL.

SNL was responsible for the performance assessment, which uses modeling to demonstrate containment of the waste for the 10,000-year regulatory period. "You can imagine how complex a set of predictive models would have to be to model the potential migration of radionuclides through geologic media over such a long time," says Dave Kessel, senior manager of SNL-Carlsbad Programs Group. "And, if that weren't enough, we are required to assume that future societies will forget that WIPP exists and will accidentally drill through the WIPP in search of petroleum or some other scarce resource. In spite of all this, the WIPP still demonstrates compliance with the release limits."

The CRA was submitted to EPA on March 26, 2004, exactly five years after the first waste was received at WIPP. Through technical and scientific analyses detailed in the application, DOE demonstrated that the WIPP will continue to safely isolate transuranic waste from the human environment.

The March 29 decision was based on various independent technical analyses, public comments, and a thorough review of facility information submitted by DOE and verifies the site's continued compliance with federal disposal regulations. The recertification process is not a reconsideration of the decision to open WIPP.

The next CRA is due to EPA by March 26, 2009. The work has already begun.

## Five continents represented at American Nuclear Society meeting in Carlsbad

There was something very international about Carlsbad this week. Apart from international visitors that regularly visit local attractions, the American Nuclear Society's (ANS) 14th Biennial Topical Meeting of Radiation Protection and Shielding Division also drew international attendees to the city. Among the 158 attendees were 35 people from outside the United States that traveled from as far as Argentina, Japan, Slovakia, Russia, Hungary and South Africa .

The technical meeting at the Pecos River Village included continuing educational workshops, exhibits and over 125 technical papers and presentations by authors from around the world. Topics ranged from radiation shielding applications, dosimetry, induced radioactivity, radiation detection and measurement and the impact of radiation on the environment.

The meeting's general chairs were Dr. Chuan-Fu Wu and Mr. Russell McCallister of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).



Dr. Chuan-Fu Wu (above) and Russell McCallister served as general chairs of the meeting.

Monday morning began with welcoming comments from some distinguished guests and honorary chairs, including CBFO Manager Dave Moody, WTS General Manager Dick Raaz, Carlsbad Mayor Bob Forrest and New Mexico State Representative John Heaton.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Glenn Knoll from the University of Michigan . Knoll discussed his observations on the evolution of radiation detectors. He said that increases in the efficiency of radiation detection could be attributed to the introduction of new technology. Knoll traced the route from the original Geiger counters through the development of semiconductors and the most recent advances in scintillators.



Health Physics Society President Ruth McBurney was a special guest speaker on Tuesday morning.

Plenary sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday featured Health Physics Society President Ruth McBurney, Dr. Cassiano De Oliveira from the Georgia Institute of Technology, and Dr. Alireza Haghighat from the University of Florida .

"The planning committee is composed of over 20 people from local sponsors, including WTS, LANL, SNL, the CEHMM and CEMRC, who have worked for more than two years to make this meeting happen," says Candice Jierree, WTS employee and incoming president of ANS' Carlsbad Chapter.

Having the meeting in Carlsbad gave nuclear industry professionals a chance to tour WIPP, learn about the importance of the project's mission from staff at the WIPP exhibit booth and see a WIPP truck with shipping containers on display in the conference center's parking lot.



Dr. Alireza Haghighat of the University of Florida.

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## Happy Birthday Wishes!

**Tricia Rose (L&M)**  
April 6

**Charlie Riggs (CTAC)**  
April 9

**Lolly Espinoza (L&M)**  
April 12

**Shari Cullum (WTS)**  
April 12

**Judy Lanier (WTS)**  
April 17

**Phil Gregory (WTS)**  
April 19

### Is your birthday on our list?

Employee birthdays are submitted once and must be re-approved for publication by you every year. Please submit birth dates to the TRU TeamWorks staff at:

[TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws](mailto:TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws).

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## Saving lives



Steve Bartlett of NCI giving blood at the Skeen-Whitlock Building. The blood drive was held at the WIPP site the following day. Between the two locations, 120 units of blood were collected. Thanks to all who participated.

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## Triumph opens office in Carlsbad

"We're excited to be part of this community," Gloria Redman told Carlsbad city officials at a March 28 luncheon. The following day, Redman, president of Triumph Technologies, Inc., led ribbon-cutting ceremonies at the company's new Carlsbad office.

Triumph is currently teamed with L&M Technologies and NCI Information Services to provide information and document services to WIPP. The new office is located at 302 N. Canal, Suite B, next to the post office.

Last year, Redman was featured in the January/February 2005 issue of *Minority Enterprise Advocate Magazine*. Triumph is a minority, woman-owned, disabled veteran small business, which had its start in program management, IT services and security support, according to executive vice president, John Branch.

### Recipe for a Strong Safety Culture

- ⌘ An abiding concern for employees and their well-being, both on and off the job
- ⌘ Authentic expressions of management commitment
- ⌘ A willingness to go beyond compliance to achieve lasting success
- ⌘ The existence and articulation of corporate values that translate into action
- ⌘ Appropriate recognition for achievement

## Safety Culture

We who are involved with the WIPP project are proud of our safety record. While a good safety record is significant to our mission, it is really about people. We create a safe work environment through awareness, attitude and action. In today's business world, this is commonly referred to as a "safety culture." The paths to a safety culture can be diverse, the opinions may be various, but we all share a common goal. Many safety professionals say the emphasis on culture appears to be eclipsing behavior-based safety as the preferred direction in seeking a way to manage and improve worker protection.

The term safety culture was first introduced by the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group following the Chernobyl accident in 1986. A British engineering group defines a safety culture as follows:

*The safety culture of an organization is the product of the individual and group values, attitudes, competencies, and patterns of behavior that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organization's health and safety programs.*

A former president of the American Society of Safety Engineers believes it's not compliance or technology, but culture that determines how safe a company will be. One of the leading indicators of a strong safety culture is when asked, "Who's responsible for safety at your workplace?" and you respond "I am" or "we all are."

***Submitted by Howard Brown, WTS***

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The U.S. Department of Energy  
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Please send comments and/or  
suggestions to: [TRU TeamWorks](#)

